

Munich

Bayerische Staatsbibliothek

clm 826

Abraham ibn Ezra, *Liber introductorius in iudicia astrorum*

** *Sufi latinus*

with other texts and diagrams

c. 1400-1419; Bohemian (Prague - made for King Wenzel of Bohemia)

A luxury manuscript made for King Wenzel of Bohemia containing the fragment of a sumptuously illustrated *Sufi latinus*.

Also contains Abraham ibn Ezra, *Principium sapientiae* (with a complete set of illustrations of the paranatellonta for each decan), Abu Ma^cshar, *De nativitatibus* and numerous astrological rotae.

texts

ff. 11va- 27rc Abraham ibn Ezra, *Liber introductorius in iudicia astrorum* (a.k.a: *Principium sapientiae* = the Pietro d'Abano Latin transl. from the Hebrew original). See THORNDIKE/ KIBRE 1963, col. 309, no. 11; ed. TATARZYK 1998 and FEDERICI VESCOVINI 1998.

inc: Incipit introductorius abrahe avennarie in iudiciis astrorum qui dicitur principium sapiencie prohemium que universale ipsius abrahe Avennarie .

Cum initium sapietiae dei timor —

ff. 27va and 33vb *Albumasar in Sadan* (a.k.a.: *Excerpta de secretis Albumasaris*). See L. THORNDIKE, 'Albumasar in Sadan', *Isis*, XLV, 1954, pp. 22-32).

inc: Dixit Sadan. Audivi Albumasar dicentem quod omnis vita —

ff. 34r-41v *Sufi latinus* (Gerard of Cremona transl.. See KUNITZSCH 1886 and KUNITZSCH 1990.

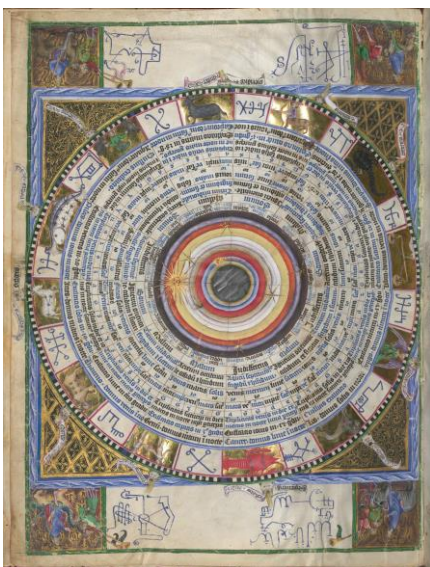
[S]telle formarum Septemtrio — (ends incompletely with Pegasus) ... inuinta quinque

ff. 46r-53v

Liber novem iudicum in iudiciis astrorum (fragments)

... tunie et equitatis et his similis causa – de carta sive epistola aomar [= Omar Tiberides]

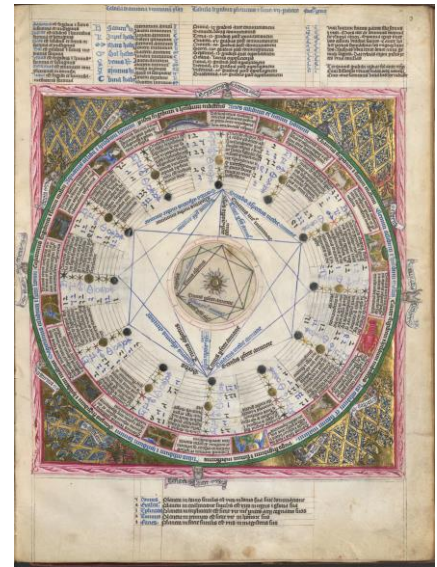
illustrations



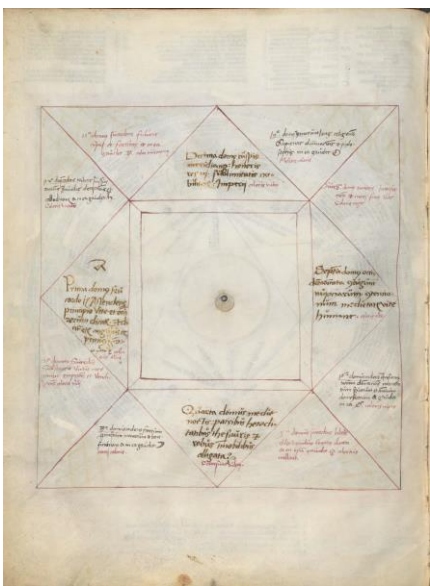
fol. 1v



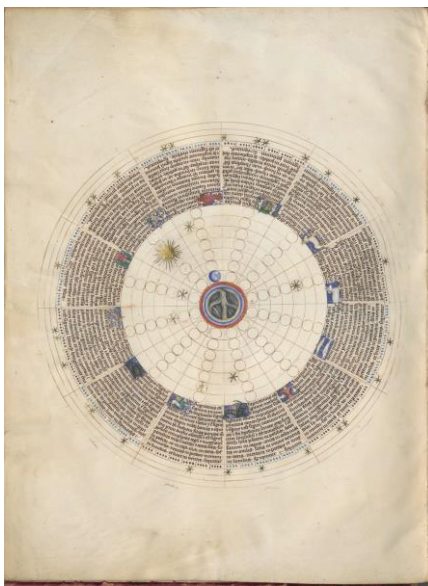
fol. 2r



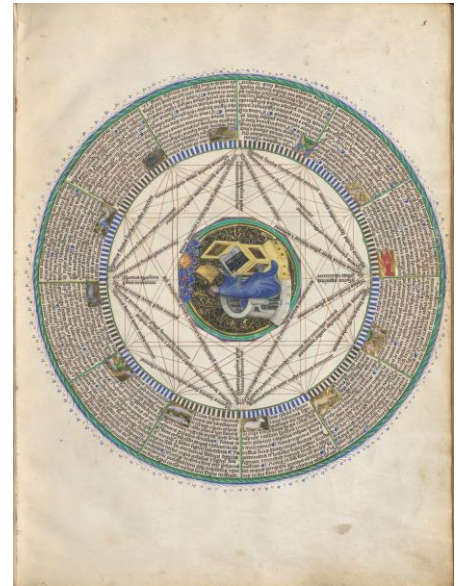
fol. 3r



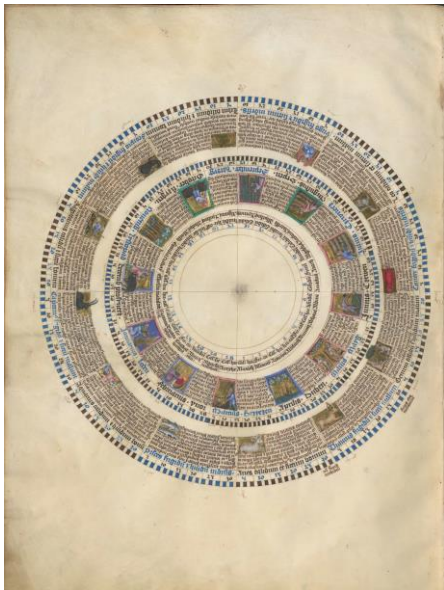
fol. 3v



fol. 7v



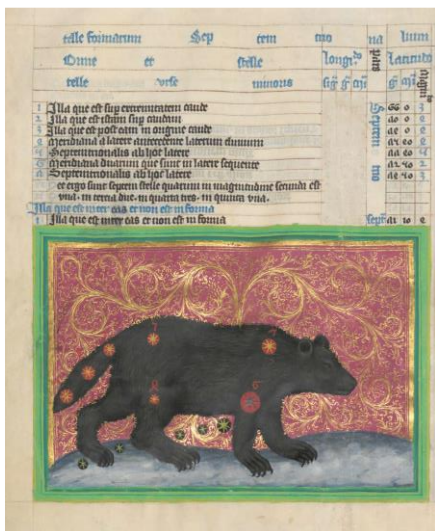
fol. 8r



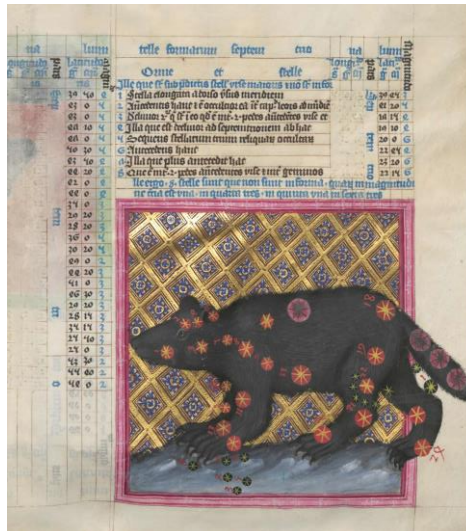
fol. 9v

ff. 11 bis r - 27v

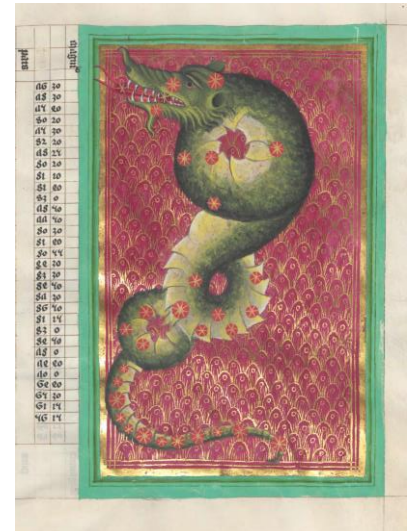
For the illustrations and descriptions of the illustrations in Abraham ibn Ezra's *Principium sapientiae* and the *Albumasar in Sadan*, see the entry under [Medieval and Renaissance Texts/Abraham ibn Ezra](#).



fol. 34r



fol. 34v



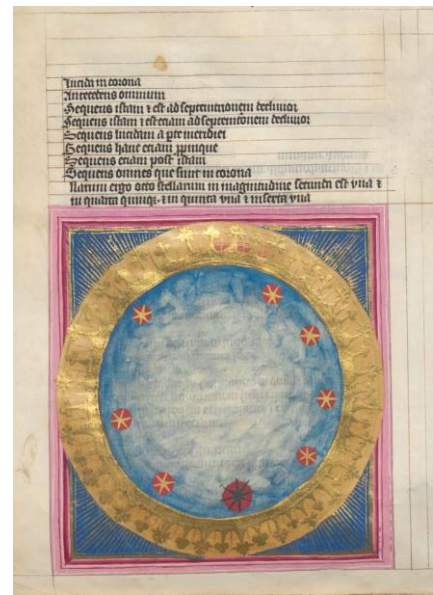
fol. 35r



fol. 35v



fol. 36r



fol. 36v



fol. 37r



fol. 37v



fol. 38r



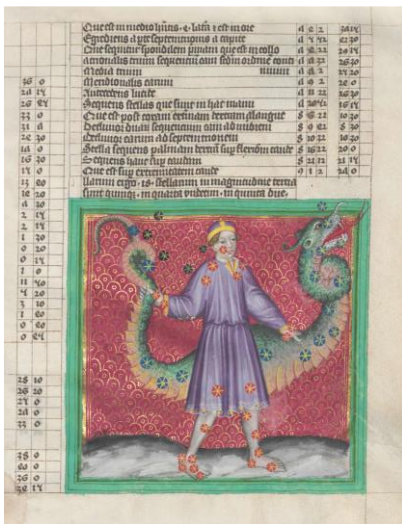
fol. 38v



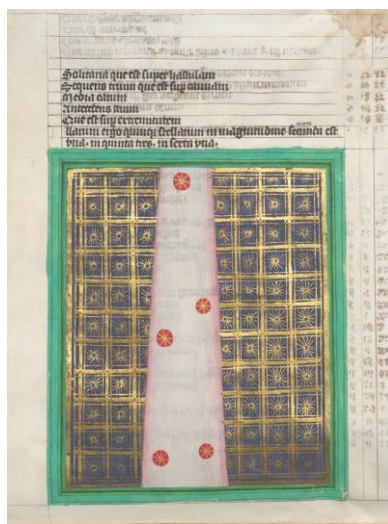
fol. 39r



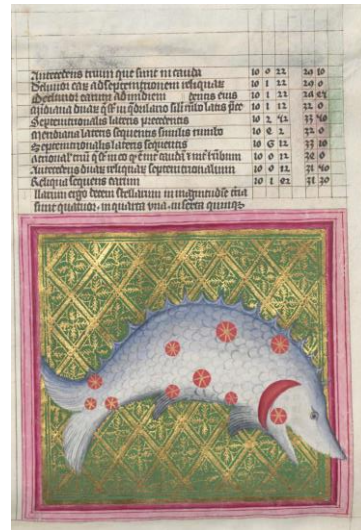
fol. 39v



fol. 40r



fol. 40v



fol. 40v



fol. 41r



fol. 41v

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- fol. 1r blank
- fol. 1v Astrological rota centred on the Earth with the elements and planetary orbs surrounding it; descriptions of the characters of the people born under the 12 signs of the zodiac and their decans; then a band of alternating astrological glyphs and zodiacal signs, bounded by a graduated scale. Taurus is full, the Gemini are naked and hold inner hands and hold flowers in their outer hands; Cancer is a crayfish; Virgo with wings; Libra as scales Aquarius with 2 urns and Pisces placed one in front of the other. There are magical glyphs at the top and the bottom of the page, depictions of kings with trumpeters in each corner and banderols with the names of the 12 winds. The image is currently bound upside-down.
- fol. 2r Astrological rota with the terrestrial climes in the middle (uninhabited extremes are painted black), surrounded by scenes containing images of the 12 zodiac signs (1/2 Taurus; Gemini as intertwined nude infants; winged Virgo, Libra as scales; Sagittarius as satyr Capricorn as a goat); then each sign divided into three decans with planetary rulers indicated by glyphs and then the facies (*fines*); on the outer band with planetary glyphs and bounded by a graduated scale. Below the rota, there is a label: *Hic sunt decani et fines planetarum secundum Julium Firmicum*. See BOLL 1903, p. 421f., n. 3.
- fol. 2v Rota of the planetary orbs with short paragraphs about the astrological qualities of each sign. Each 30° marked by a small picture of the appropriate zodiacal sign and a paragraph of text.
- fol. 3r Astrological rota with schema of different aspects centred on a small rotating volvelle. There is an astronomer/astrologer seated at the centre-point looking up

- to the 'heavens'. The rota is surrounded by sections of texts providing information about 'falling stars' (*quando aliqua stella cadit ab ariete...*) and a series of zodiac images with descriptions of the planets that have their Domus in each, etc. See BOLL 1903, p. 422, note 3.
- fol. 3v Square astrological diagram showing the qualities of the 12 heavenly houses, with Capricorn in the Asc.). There is a note added by a previous owner of the manuscript, the Nuremberg patrician Wilhelm IV Haller. See CERMANN 2014, p. 134f. and p. 147, fig. 19.
- ff. 4r-7r blank (ff. 4r and 5r have scored sets of concentric circles for rotae that were not completed).
- fol. 7v An astrological rota centred on the earth, surrounded by 12 zodiac signs and text describing their properties. See BOLL 1903, p. 422, n. 3.
- fol. 8r Astrological rota centred on an astronomer (*Tyrzyccko* = Teukros?) using a quadrant. The book in front of him bears an inscription: *respice super quard [sic] solem*. He is surrounded by sets of aspects amongst the 12 zodiac signs and descriptions of their influences.
- ff.8v-9r blank
- fol. 9v Astrological rota with a list of the 28 lunar mansions, surrounded by images and descriptions of the occupations of the months (giving both Latin and Arabic names). The outermost ring contains a set of the 12 zodiac signs and explanations of their roles as planetary houses.
- ff. 34v- 41v An incomplete set of constellations with the tables from *Sufi latinus*. The stars are indicated by red circles within which there are silvered or golden stars. They are all numbered in Arabic numerals to coincide with the accompanying tables.
- fol. 34r URSA MINOR is a black bear with a long tail walking towards the right.
- fol. 34v URSA MAIOR is a black bear with a long tail walking towards the left.
- fol. 35r DRACO is a serpent with a dragon's face and a long green, scaly body with 3 curls.
- fol. 35v CEPHEUS is a bearded man wearing a loose green tunic and a tall pink cap. He walks to the right with his arms swinging freely.
- fol. 36r BOOTES is a bearded man standing slightly to the left and wearing a loose grey tunic. He raises his right hand and holds a sword vertically in his left hand; he is barefoot. Arcturus is marked as a golden star on a blue background between his calves.
- fol. 36v CORONA BOREALIS is a gilded circlet.
- fol. 37r HERCULES is a beardless man, dressed in a yellow belted tunic with blue reverses and a round lavender cap on his head. He kneels to the left with his right leg leading. Both his hands are raised and he holds a curved knife in his raised left hand.

- fol. 37v LYRA is a fat-belling blue urn with a rose interior, gold and rose foot and a golden rim/handles.
- fol. 38r CYGNUS is depicted as a rooster set vertically on the page with its wings outstretched.
- fol. 38r CASSIOPEIA sits slightly to the right and is dressed in a belted pink robe and wears a crown on her head. She has very long blonde hair. The back of the 'throne' looks more like a spear held vertically in her right hand. She holds her left hand in front of her with the palm facing upwards.
- fol. 39r PERSEUS is an older bearded man dressed in a short, belted green robe with red decoration around the neck and an ermine and red cap. He holds a black demon's head (*caput Algol*) in his right hand and lifts a straight sword above his head with his left hand.
- fol. 39v AURIGA is a young man facing to the right. He is dressed in a belted pink robe, which he clutches at his waist with his left hand. He wears an ermine and green and red cap and he walks to the right. He holds a stick vertically in his right hand.
- fol. 40r OPHIUCHUS is a young man in a violet belted tunic walking to the right. He holds the large green and yellow snake behind him, its heads towards the right.
- fol. 40 v SAGITTA is a whitish trapezoidal shape with 5 stars.
- DELPHINUS is a large silver fish with red gills, a pointed snout and spiny dorsal fin. It is facing to the right.
- fol. 41r AQUILA is a black eagle; standing towards the right.
- fol. 41v EQUULEUS is the *protome* of a grey horse facing towards the left.
- PEGASUS is the front half of a winged grey horse, facing to the left with his front legs extended.

notes

47.2 x 34.8 cm, parchment, 53 folia.

The manuscript was created for King Wenzel of Bohemia (see his emblems on ff. 1v; 11va; 15rc; 39vb as well as the 'w' and 'e' in the backgrounds of Libra and Auriga; cf. also Vienna; ÖNB; cod. 2352), probably during the last two decades of his life († 1419). It appears to have come into the BSB via the library of the Dukes of Bavaria (*ex libris* of the Munich court library from 1618).

The manuscript appears never to have been completed fully and also possibly suffered some losses during the early re-bindings of the manuscript's contents. The incomplete nature of the manuscript is attested to by several sets of headings, initials and rubrics etc.

that are missing, as well as by the fact that the outlines for a number of astrological *rotae* have been scored, but not completed. The *Sufi latinus* ends abruptly with fol. 41v (Equuleus and Pegasus), suggesting that the later pages were not finished or, perhaps, lost; and the contents of the *Liber novem iudicum astrorum* are fragmentary and a set of volvelles that should have accompanied the text are also missing.

The illustrations of the constellations in the *Sufi latinus* are quite close to the manuscript in Prague (Strahovkloster, DA II 13) and, therefore, show that it belongs to the so-called 'Italian' family of *Sufi latinus* manuscripts connected to the northern Italian manuscript in Paris (Bibl. Arsenal, lat 1036). Metzger (BLUME/HAFFNER/METZGER 2016, II, 1, p. 363) notes that the 'horizontal' lay-out of the text in the Munich manuscript can also be found in the Stellar Tables of the early 15th-century manuscript in Brussels (Bibliothèque Royale Albert 1er, Ms. 10117-26, fol. 54r-79r), which originates from the Upper Palantinate region - though one must stress that the quality and sophistication of the text and illustrations in these two manuscripts could not be more different .

The origin of the illustrations of the decans and *paranatellonta* in the *Principium sapientiae* remain the subject of debate. Boll (1903) suggested that they were based directly on the information supplied in the Latin translation of ibn Ezra's text by Pietro d'Abano (an opinion with which Metzger seems to agree, though he cites the possibility that an illustrated copy of the Fendulus text might have been available for consultation. See METZGER, *op. cit.*, pp. 366-67). The main difference between the Fendulus manuscripts and the Munich one, however, is that that latter does not maintain the division of the images into the three different spheres of the 'Persian', 'Indians' and 'Greeks'.

bibliography:

ALBUMASAR 1489.

HALM 1892, p. 199 f.

THIELE 1898, p. 150 f.

BOLL 1903, pp. 420-425.

GUNDEL 1936, p. 175 f.

- BYVANCK 1949, p. 211, no. 28.
- LEMAY 1962.
- VERMEIREN 1953.
- FISCHER 1960.
- FISCHER 1963, pp. 8-12.
- KRÁSA 1964, pp. 466-486.
- STEJSKAL/KRASA 1964, pp. 74 f.
- SCHMIDT 1969, pp. 230, 238 f, 249, 434 and n. 297.
- CIMELIA MONACENSIA 1970, pp. 37 f, plate 45 (fol. 34r Ursa minor).
- FISCHER 1970, pp. 338, 341 f and 344.
- KRÁSA 1971, p. 56 f.
- AURIGEMMA 1976a, pp. 32 f.
- Die parler und der schöne Stil* [exh. cat., Cologne 1978], pp. 81f and 104 f.
- STAMM 1978, p. 369.
- CLARK 1979, pp. 11 f, 156, nn. 30 and 31, 173f, 185, 188, n. 15 and 219.
- KRAMER 1982.
- DOMÌNGUEZ RODRÌGUEZ 1983, pp. 109-119 and 189-192.
- DOMÍNGUEZ RODRÍGUEZ 1984a, pp. 229 and 231.
- LIPPINCOTT 1985, p. 67.
- KUNITZSCH 1986a, p. 68.
- HACKER 1986, p. 20, n. 48.
- GÖTTER 1990, pp. 148, 150, ill. 39G (fol. 39rb Perseus).
- LIPPINCOTT 1993, p. 43, fig. 9 (fol. 41v Equuleus, Pegasus).
- ŚNIEŻYNSKA-STOLOT 1994, p. 66.
- ŚNIEŻYNSKA-STOLOT 1997, p. 92.
- ŚNIEŻYNSKA-STOLOT 1998.
- FEDERICI VESCOVINI 1998, pp. 293 and 296-330.

CERMANN 2014, pp. 134f, 141 and 147, fig. 19.

BLUME/HAFFNER/METZGER 2016, II, 1, pp. 62-63, 361-73(cat. 38) and II, 3, pls. 42-44 and 376-96.

The manuscript is available on-line in black and white at:

<https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/en/details/bsb00060100>

and in colour at:

<https://iiif.biblissima.fr/collections/manifest/0d9fd844ea67eef0253942f03a2edfa9803f5d1f>